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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/698,858	10/31/2003	Gary T. Seim	GUID.014US01	9341
51294 7590 02/17/2012 HOLLINGSWORTH & FUNK 8500 Normandale Lake Blvd SUITE 320 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55437				
EXAMINER				
HOLMES, REX R				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3762				
NOTIFICATION DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
02/17/2012		ELECTRONIC		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

tdotter@hfiplaw.com
roswood@hfiplaw.com

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/698,858

Applicant(s)

SEIM ET AL.

Examiner

REX R. HOLMES

Art Unit

3762

Period for Reply
-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 January 2012.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ An election was made by the applicant in response to a restriction requirement set forth during the interview on ____; the restriction requirement and election have been incorporated into this action.
- 4) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1,4,6,13,18,20,21,29,30,33,36,39-41,48,53,55,58,60,63 and 64 is/are pending in the application.
- 5a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 1,4,6,13,18,20,21,29,30,33,36,39-41,48,53,55,58,60,63 and 64 is/are rejected.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 9) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 10) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-946)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: ____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: ____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 1/16/12 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office Action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the Examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the Examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

4. Claims 1, 13, 18, 20, 33, 36, 39, 48, 53, 55, 60 and 63-64 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ritscher et al. (U.S. Pub. 2004/0220624 hereinafter "Ritscher") in view of Levine et al. (U.S. Pat. 7,031,773 hereinafter "Levine") in view of Salo et al. (U.S. Pat. 4,686,987).

5. Ritscher teaches a system for controlling ATP therapy by detecting pro-arrhythmia criteria, disabling ATP therapy and then allowing the therapy to be re-enabled by an external controller (e.g. ¶¶ 5, 7, 11, 12). Ritscher discloses that one pro-arrhythmia criteria is lead dislodgement (e.g. ¶¶ 5). Ritscher discloses the claimed invention as discussed above, but fails to disclose that it uses an impedance threshold developed for the particular patient or the exact method in which it determines if there is a lead related condition.

6. Levine et al. disclose measuring an impedance of an atrial lead (e.g., column 11, lines 5 and 7–10; column 13, lines 52–53; column 14, lines 21–23); comparing a measured impedance with an impedance threshold developed for a particular patient (e.g., column 11, lines 11–15; column 8, last line–column 9, lines 1–2; column 13, lines 59–60); disabling atrial ATP therapy delivery in response to a measured impedance deviating from an impedance threshold by a predetermined factor (e.g., column 11, lines 11–19 wherein the step of switching the electrode configuration to an electrode configuration other than the current electrode configuration represents disabling atrial ATP therapy delivery to the electrode configuration previously receiving the therapy); measuring a capture threshold (e.g., column 12, lines 26–28), and a sense amplitude (evoked response) (e.g., column 7, lines 59 and 65; column 10, lines 12–13 and 28–30)

(claims 20, 55, and 62); comparing capture threshold, and sense amplitude measurements with capture threshold, and sense amplitude limits, respectively (e.g., column 10, lines 35–55) (claims 20, 55, and 62); an implantable housing (e.g., Fig. 1); detection circuitry (e.g., Fig. 2); energy delivery circuitry (e.g., Fig. 2); a lead system respectively coupled to a detection and energy delivery circuitry, a lead system comprising at least an atrial lead (e.g., Figs. 1–2) and a control system provided in a housing and coupled to memory within which an impedance threshold developed for a particular patient is stored (e.g., Fig. 2) (claim 36).

7. Levine et al. further discloses an impedance threshold is developed from a single atrial lead impedance measurement (claims 2, 26, and 37) and a plurality of atrial lead impedance measurements (claims 3, 27 and 38) (e.g., Fig. 3; column 11, lines 11–15); wherein measuring an impedance of an atrial lead comprises taking a plurality of impedance measurements to characterize an impedance of an atrial lead (claims 9 and 44) (e.g., Fig. 3, elements 208 and 220); measuring an impedance of an atrial lead comprises taking a single impedance measurement to characterize an impedance of an atrial lead (claims 10 and 45) (e.g., column 13, lines 52–53); a predetermined factor is characterized by a percentage change in a measured impedance relative to an impedance threshold (claims 11, 31 and 46) (e.g., column 11, lines 10–15) and a fixed delta change (500 ohms) in the measured impedance relative to the impedance threshold (claims 12, 32 and 47) (e.g., column 11, lines 13–14) and both a percentage change and a fixed delta change in the measured impedance relative to the impedance threshold (claims 13, 33 and 48) (e.g., column 11, lines 10–15 and 13–14); measuring

an impedance comprises delivering a pace pulse via an atrial lead and deriving an impedance measurement using a delivered pace pulse (claims 14 and 49) (e.g., Fig. 3; column 12, lines 7–14) and using a delivered stimulus, a stimulus having an energy insufficient to effect atrial capture (claims 15 and 50) (e.g., Fig. 3; column 12, lines 22–30); an impedance is measured after detection of an atrial arrhythmic event and prior to atrial ATP therapy delivery (claims 16, 34 and 51) (e.g., Fig. 3; column 12, lines 9–25); an impedance is measured after an atrial arrhythmic episode is declared and prior to atrial ATP therapy delivery (claims 17, 35 and 52) (e.g., Fig. 3; column 12, lines 31–37); measuring an impedance comprises taking a plurality of impedance measurements after detection of an atrial arrhythmic event (claims 18 and 53) and after an atrial arrhythmic episode is declared (claims 19 and 54) and prior to atrial ATP therapy delivery (e.g., Fig. 3; column 12, lines 9–25); disabling ATP therapy delivery comprises, upon detection of an atrial arrhythmia, ignoring a capture threshold and sense amplitude deviations (claims 25 and 60), and disabling ATP therapy in response only to the measured impedance deviating from the impedance limit by the predetermined factor (claims 24, 25, 59, and 60) (e.g., Fig. 3; column 12, lines 31–37); an impedance threshold is capable of being characterized by a mean or a median of a plurality of atrial lead impedance measurements (claim 39) because a variance from a previous measurement by some other suitable value (e.g., as shown in column 12 lines 18–21), for example, a mean or median value, is commonly used in an impedance measurement system to measure lead impedance. Levine further discloses that the

system includes a telemetry system to transmitting warnings to and external device and further receiving commands from and external device (e.g. Col. 11, ll. 1-9).

8. Regarding claims 1, 13, 18, 20, 33, 36, 39, 48, 53, 55, 60 and 63-64, Ritscher discloses controlling ATP therapy, but fails to expressly disclose that it uses a impedance threshold developed for the particular patient. However, Levine et al. discloses a system for determining a lead related condition by measuring impedance using a threshold and further using the system as disclosed above. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system as taught by Ritscher, with lead condition system that utilizes thresholds as taught by Levine, since such a modification would provide the predictable results of using impedance measurements along with patient specific thresholds to determine lead related conditions in order to control therapy in the event of a lead related condition.

9. Regarding claims 1, 13, 18, 20, 33, 36, 39, 48, 53, 55, 60 and 63-64, Ritscher in view of Levine discloses the claimed invention but fails to explicitly state that the stimulus for determine the impedance is a subthreshold pulse. However, Salo discloses that it is known to use subthreshold pulses to determine impedance as set forth in (e.g. Column 2, line 50 to Column 3, line 8 and Column 5, lines 22-41) to provide a means for actively determining impedance during the use of the device without unwanted stimulation of the tissue so as to not impact the patient and/or the effectiveness of the device. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system as taught by Ritscher in view of Levine, with

subthreshold stimulation as taught by Salo, since such a modification would provide the predictable results of determining the impedance with sub-threshold stimulation pulses for providing a means for actively determining impedance during the use of the device without unwanted stimulation of the tissue so as to not impact the patient and/or the effectiveness of the device.

10. Claims 4, 6, 21, 29–30, 40–41, 58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ritscher in view Levine et al. (U.S. Pat. 7,031,773) in view of Salo et al. (U.S. Pat. 4,686,987).

11. Regarding Claims 4, 6, 29–30 and 40–41 Ritscher in view Levine in view of Salo disclose the essential features of the claimed invention as discussed above except for an impedance threshold is characterized by a mean or a median of a plurality of atrial lead impedance measurements (claims 4 and 39) and by an atrial lead impedance measurement taken immediately before a currently measured impedance (claims 5, 28 and 40) and at least one atrial lead impedance measurement taken a predetermined amount of time prior to the impedance measurement (claims 6, 29, and 41); and a predetermined amount of time is about one day (claims 7, 30 and 42) and more than one day (claims 8 and 42). However, it is well known in the art to characterize an impedance threshold as set forth in the claim limitations stated herein because they indicate relative displacement of the implanted cardiac lead giving the physician viable information to initiate definitive therapy at the appropriate time. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the invention of Ritscher in view Levine in view of Salo to include an

impedance threshold is characterized by a mean or a median of a plurality of atrial lead impedance measurements and by an atrial lead impedance measurement taken immediately before a currently measured impedance and at least one atrial lead impedance measurement taken a predetermined amount of time prior to the impedance measurement; and a predetermined amount of time is about one day and more than one day to provide the predictable results of a device that allows for delivery of optimal and efficient therapy in a timely manner.

12. Regarding claims 21 and 58, Ritscher in view Levine et al. in view of Salo et al. disclose the claimed invention as discussed in claim 20 above but does not disclose expressly detecting an ambiguity in the impedance, capture threshold, and sense amplitude deviations. It would have been an obvious matter of engineering design choice to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the impedance, capture threshold, and sense amplitude as taught by Levine et al. (e.g., as discussed in the rejection for claim 20 above), to detect an ambiguity, because Applicant has not disclosed that detecting an ambiguity provides an advantage, is used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected the Applicant's invention to perform equally well with the impedance, capture threshold, and sense amplitude as taught by Ritscher in view Levine et al. in view of Salo et al., because they indicate relative displacement of the implanted cardiac lead giving the physician viable information to initiate definitive therapy at the appropriate time and provide a device that allows for delivery of optimal and efficient therapy in a timely manner. Therefore, it would have been an obvious

matter of engineering design choice to modify the impedance, capture threshold, and sense amplitude to obtain the invention as specified in the claims.

Response to Arguments

13. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 4, 6, 13-15, 18, 20, 21, 29, 30, 33, 36, 39-41, 48-50, 53, 55, 58, 60, 63-64 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

14. However, regarding the Ritscher and Levine references, the Applicant argues that Ritscher in view of Levine fails to teach the claimed invention, specifically Levine fails to teach measuring lead impedance with ATP therapy and further Levine fails to disable ATP therapy delivery. It is noted that the claims were rejected with an obviousness rejection using Ritscher in view of Levine. Ritscher teaches a system for controlling ATP therapy by detecting pro-arrhythmia criteria, disabling ATP therapy and then allowing the therapy to be re-enabled by an external controller (e.g. ¶¶ 5, 7, 11, 12). Ritscher discloses that one pro-arrhythmia criteria is lead dislodgement (e.g. ¶¶ 5). Ritscher teaches everything but fails to explicitly state that the system utilizes lead impedance to find lead dislodgement. However, Levine teaches that it is known to use lead impedance to detect lead dislodgement. Therefore, the combination teaches the claimed invention. The fact that Levine may or may not teach disabling of ATP therapy is moot as Ritscher clearly teaches this step.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to REX R. HOLMES whose telephone number is (571)272-8827. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:00 - 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Niketa Patel can be reached on (571) 272-4156. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/REX R HOLMES/

Examiner, Art Unit 3762